

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, as the jet fumes swirl around the Halls of Congress and Members get ready to head to the airport to get home for the holidays, I rise to remind my colleagues that there are still hundreds of thousands of people in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico who are still hurting from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. They will be spending Christmas not in their homes but in a hotel or with family and friends or in temporary housing.

All across these regions, there are houses, businesses, schools, churches, and community establishments that still need to be rebuilt. They are waiting, counting on our help. It is wrong. Indeed, it is maddening to those in the affected regions that the Senate is not taking up legislation today to give them what they need to continue to rebuild and recover.

In my home State, there is no doubting that Texas's gulf coast communities suffered tremendous losses in Hurricane Harvey, but the hurricane also brought out the best in Texas. We saw Texans standing together and lifting up each other, first through rescue and response and now as we come together and rebuild our communities. The Nation witnessed our iconic moments, from the thousands of Texans who went out on boats to save their neighbors, to Houstonians of all ages lining up to volunteer at disaster recovery centers, embodying the Texas can-do spirit.

Texas has worked diligently since August on cleanup and recovery efforts from Hurricane Harvey, but I am sorry to say that the U.S. Senate is now leaving town without delivering on its commitment to help Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico recover.

Congress has already passed two disaster relief bills in the wake of these hurricanes. In addition, Congress passed a bipartisan disaster relief tax bill that I was proud to offer. But there is still much more that needs to be done.

Just hours ago, our colleagues in the House passed a bill to further provide for emergency rebuilding efforts. This bill represents progress, but much more work needs to be done to make sure that it does enough, especially for Texas, which was promised by both this Congress and by the administration that Texas would be given everything we need to rebuild. Early estimates from the supplemental bill that passed the House are that Texas would be eligible for only a small percentage of the \$81 billion in that legislation. That is unacceptable, and the Senate needs to fix it.

Texas experienced the worst flood event in U.S. history. Hurricane Harvey was unlike any other storm we

have seen before in Texas—the number of people impacted, the scope. It brought 250 miles of devastation to our Texas gulf coast as winds obliterated whole communities and rain flooded out parts of Texas that have never flooded before.

Due to the level of damage the storm caused to homes, businesses, and infrastructure, Hurricane Harvey was the costliest disaster this year and may well prove the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history. According to the Governor of Texas, the damage to our State from the hurricane is well over \$120 billion and could prove to be closer to \$180 billion. Any bill to provide disaster funding brought to this floor should recognize the unprecedented level of damage wreaked upon the State and should provide the level of assistance necessary to help Texas rebuild.

I spoke this afternoon with Governor Greg Abbott, and he expressed serious concerns that the supplemental bill coming out of the House does not direct nearly enough resources to the State of Texas given the magnitude of the damage, the magnitude of the suffering. Disaster relief needs to focus where the suffering occurred and where the disaster occurred.

I am hopeful that when this body returns in 2 weeks, we will work together in a bipartisan way to ensure that the promises made to the State of Texas are fulfilled and that the resources are there to help our State rebuild. The emergency response is over, but recovery and rebuilding efforts go on. As we keep working to keep our promises, I remain determined to keep fighting to ensure that Texas has the Federal resources to which the State is entitled under Federal law.

The spirit of Texas is strong. Some weeks ago, I tweeted out a picture that I think captured some of that spirit. It was a picture of a man in his living room. The Sheetrock was torn down from all the walls—nothing but studs on the walls and no carpet. The flooring was taken up. There was no furniture. He had a lawn chair. He had an Igloo ice chest as a coffee table and a TV screen, and he was wearing a Houston Astros jersey and cheering as the Astros won the World Series. The tweet simply said: “This is why it matters.” That is the spirit of Texas. We need to remember that spirit, and we need to make sure the disaster relief responds to the real damage and real suffering that Hurricane Harvey visited upon the State of Texas.

I look forward to working with my colleagues, hopefully from both sides of the aisle, to deliver on that commitment that Texans are owed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

PRESSING ISSUES AT YEAR END

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, as we know all too well, the Senate of the

United States has an annual job to do—to adopt a budget and then appropriate it; to lay out the framework for what to spend and then to make deliberate decisions in the Appropriations Committee and move forward by the end of the fiscal year.

This may not be well or widely known, but the Federal fiscal year begins October 1. It is by October 1 that we are supposed to figure out what we are going to spend and how we are going to spend it and why we are going to spend it.

As we all head home to celebrate the holidays on December 21, I just wanted to take a moment and go over the list of things that are unaddressed and unresolved at the end of this calendar year.

The way it is supposed to work here and the way it is actually working here are strikingly different. In my 7 years now in the Senate on both the Budget Committee and the Appropriations Committee, I have seen people of good will of both parties try mightily and so far consistently fail to get us back to regular order and to end this process of moving crisis to crisis, continuing resolution to continuing resolution.

While I didn't hope that tonight the Federal Government of the United States would shut down, it is depressing, concerning, even alarming to me that we head home having not resolved so many issues.

We have heard from other Members here about the pressing needs of their home States. We have concerns all over our country, such as the Children's Health Insurance Program, known as CHIP, which is a literal lifeline to 9 million low-income children. Authorization and funding ran out months ago. Some States are already notifying parents that their children's health insurance coverage will lapse. There are community health centers on which 26 million patients rely. There is the pressing need to fund a response to the opioid crisis, the need to fund veterans' care, infrastructure, shore up pension plans, invest in education, and, of course, respond to natural disasters. From Americans in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands to Americans in Texas and Florida and Louisiana, to those in California and the West—whether it is hurricanes or forest fires, parts of our Nation are literally flooding and burning. Yet we head home having not addressed their challenges.

Of course, I feel concerned that we have failed to act to protect the Dreamers here in our country, the young men and women brought here who have never known any other country, men and women who reflect the best of our country. I met many in my home State of Delaware. They are high school and college students, members of our military, parts of our neighborhoods and communities. But given the Trump administration's decision, the President's decision to end an administrative policy allowing these young people to come out of the shadows and